

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
Room 4139
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
(916) 319-2006
FAX (916) 319-2106

DISTRICT OFFICE
3501 Civic Center Drive
Suite 412
San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 479-4920
FAX (415) 479-2123



Jared Huffman
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, 6TH DISTRICT

CHAIR, Environmental Safety
& Toxic Materials Committee

COMMITTEES
Appropriations
Utilities and Commerce
Water Parks and Wildlife

June 17, 2008

Ed Schafer, Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Schafer:

I am writing to request that your Department of Agriculture rethink its strategy regarding the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM).

The LBAM eradication program in California was designed and is being carried out by our state's Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), but the program is being driven in large part by federal law and the emergency declaration by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The plan to aerially spray pesticides over large swaths of residential neighborhoods in Northern California's Bay Area is deeply flawed and has generated a firestorm of opposition, the likes of which I have never seen in my 14 years as an elected official. This decision was made by CDFA without any public participation, without any analyses or assurances from public health officials, and with no regard to how the people of the Bay Area would feel about having a pesticide repeatedly sprayed down upon them and their homes, yards, swimming pools, playgrounds, childcare centers, and hospitals over the course of several months. Understandably, the people of the Bay Area are crying foul by the thousands.

I am encouraged that members of Congress, including Speaker Nancy Pelosi and my federal representatives have begun asking questions of USDA officials, and I am pleased that Governor Schwarzenegger has agreed to delay aerial spraying for the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) in order to allow acute testing of eye, inhalation, respiratory and other potential irritants, known as the "six-pack" toxicology test. In addition, spraying in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties has been suspended by court order until environmental reviews are completed. These actions are in response to public outrage and wide-spread advocacy on the parts of many community leaders and elected officials.

I urge you to suspend your actions on LBAM to allow the time to develop a more thoughtful, reasoned approach to addressing the LBAM issue and to let the California State Legislature finish voting on the LBAM-related bills that it is now considering. Working cooperatively with the Legislature, I believe federal and state authorities can develop and implement a LBAM program that reflects sound science and protects our health, environment and economy. For that to happen, your leadership is needed to reconsider the Light Brown Apple Moth eradication program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jared Huffman", with a stylized flourish at the end.

JARED HUFFMAN
Assemblymember, 6th District